"Collecting toddy, morning and afternoon, is a daily task for the younger men. Climbing coconut trees is not expected of older ones."

28: Spiro--144
116, 512

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"Though the daily routine varies seasonally, and even daily and though it varies from individual to individual, and according to age and sex, certain over-all patterns may be described.

Usually the entire population is up at dawn. The first to get up are the mothers with infants, for they must take their babies to be washed in the lagoon. If a woman has decided to work in the taro patch that day, she rises with the crowing of the cocks. Men and women wash in the lagoon upon waking in the morning, unless the woman is going to the taro patch, in which case she waits until her return. The young men and women do not usually wash until the afternoon. For upon rising the young men usually have the responsibility of getting toddy, and the young women go in the bush for flowers, or may prepare food."

28: Spiro--144 [2] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 512, 264 Ifalik

"People do not eat immediately upon rising; indeed it would be difficult to indicate any general pattern of regularity of meals. People may or may not eat, as they please, when they awaken. And they eat whatever happens to be at hand-- a coconut, or leftover food from the day before. The women of the household may prepare some food in the morning, which may then be eaten about 9:00 by anyone who happens to be present."

28: Spiro--144 [3] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 512, 272 Ifalik

"Everyone has his toddy in the morning. A person could no more begin his day without toddy than the average American can begin his without coffee. But toddy in Ifaluk is more than the 'national drink.' There is almost an aura of sanctity surrounding it, and it becomes almost a moral duty to make it. Should a man not make toddy, he is accused of violating one of the important marital and familial obligations. Since the toddy is one of the few sources of concentrated sweet or sugary foods the people have, the emphasis placed on it might be explained on this rational basis. But this rational consideration, I do not believe is a sufficient explanation. The attitude towards it is much too reverential to be explained on purely utilitarian grounds. Men sacrifice for toddy certain conveniences they would sacrifice for nothing else. For example, rainy and damp days are abhorred by the natives, and all activity practically ceases. But one activity that continues, however, no matter how bad the weather, is the collection of toddy. The first thing the men did after the big blow, which the natives called a minor typhoon, was to collect their toddy."

28: Spiro--144 [4]
116, 264, 512, 462

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"There is no family noon meal either. There is usually some cooked food in the house by noontime, which the members of the family may consume together. If the men have no special economic activity which keeps them busy, they may return to their homes to eat. On the other hand, if they are occupied in some communal work, they do not eat at all until they complete the job, and then will eat in the canoe houses, the food having been prepared by the women. If engaging in ordinary sustained work, such as construction of a canoe, the men will eat about noon, but again they will eat in the canoe houses-coconuts, small fish caught in the traps, and/or prepared taro or breadfruit brought by the women. The boys, young and old, may eat with the men, if they are helping in the work, they may go home to eat, or, if they had caught some small fish, or crabs, they prepare them themselves, and eat along the beaches, rather than take them home. This means that the women and girls are the only ones at home at noon, and they usually eat together."

28: Spiro--145
116, 264, 512, 593

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"Though, again there is much variation, the evening meal is usually a cooked meal, and is usually a family meal. The time of eating varies anywhere from about 5:00 to 8:00. However, except for the women, there is no regularity about the other members of the family coming home for dinner. They may eat at other homes, or they may not feel like eating at all. The food is prepared, however, if they want it. But no one is important enough that the family cannot eat until he returns. This need not surprise us. Ifaluk, being so small, the members of the family are always in close proximity to the home. A person may return to his house a dozen or more times a day. The evening meal, therefore, is not the only opportunity that members of the family have to see each other. They are always near each other, so that closeness--both physical and psychological--is always felt, without the institution of the family meal."

28: Spiro--145 [2] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 512, 261 Ifalik

"Furthermore, with respect to the sheer physical fact of eating, there is no compulsive ritual about eating in Ifaluk. People eat when hungry, there being no compulsion to eat at certain regular intervals or times. As already mentioned, any person is offered food whenever he enters a courtyard. This is true of children, as well. Ordinarily, therefore, people are not famished when 6:00 comes around. Furthermore, since no one has pressing appointments, it is not necessary that everyone eat at the same time, so as to enable the individual members of the family may get away on time for an evening engagement. There is nothing that cannot wait."

28: Spiro--145-146
116, 512, 276, 461

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-1-3
Ifalik

"Unless there is something special the men are doing in the way of communal construction or communal fishing, their average day involves no special committments. Usually they go to the canoe houses, where they may make rope, or may just sit around talking, (5) gossiping, and smoking (6) or perhaps take a nap. Rope making is [146] probably the activity that consumes most of a man's time. While making rope, of course, the men continue their conversations. Often, however, they just sit in the canoe-houses,

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"5. The people rarely, if ever, sit on the bare ground. They always sit on a mat, and if there is none around, they will sit on a coconut husk, or any other object that happens to be about. At first I thought that sitting on the bare ground is tabooed behavior, perhaps the soil is holy. Upon inquiring I discovered the real reason is much more prosaic. The natives simply do not like the feeling of the damp ground. I must have seemed boorish to the people when I first came, because I would sit on the ground without bothering about a mat or a coconut husk.

6. [See following sheet for footnote 6.]"

28: Spiro--145-146
116, 512, 276, 461

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-2
Ifalik

"6. [Footnote p. 146] Smoking is a cooperative enterprise. When a person lights a cigarette, he invariably passes it to the person near him, after he has smoked a short time. That person, in turn, passes it on, so that it might change hands five or six times until it is consumed. When we first arrived on the island, I not only did not pass on my cigarette, but I would put out my cigarette butt, rather than pass it on. I soon noticed the questioning look on the faces of the people at this anti-social behavior, It was not till a few weeks had passed that I learned the native pattern, and conformed to it."

engaging in no activity at all, not even talking. This is quite strange from a western perspective, where a congregation of people always leads to conversation. The Ifaluk men, however, may sit for long periods of time, just staring into space. In any event, the canoe house is the place where men spend a great deal of their waking hours. It is really, as we have already indicated, the men's club house, as well as the locale for most economic activity. That the canoe-house serves a basic social need is indicated by the fact that men never make rope at home. The twisting of rope involves no great activity nor is it messy, and could very well be done at home, either in the house or alongside it. The reason for going to the canoe-house, therefore, is entirely for the purpose of conviviality."

28: Spiro--146 (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 512, 462, 517 Ifalik

"The women spend their days in various activities. If they work in the taro patches, they remain the entire morning and part of the afternoon. Otherwise, they may cook or work on a skirt, or look after the house. Like the men, the women do not like to work alone, and usually gather in groups for their work, at which time conversation and gossip, as well as singing, are all part of the day's activity. Some of the work, like cooking is enhanced by the women working in groups. But usually, the work itself is entirely individualistic, the gathering together, being entirely for reasons of sociability and conversation."

28: Spiro--147 [2] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 222, 512, 515 Ifalik

"In the late afternoon the young men again collect their toddy. And at the same time, they take their afternoon bath. Everyone bathes in the late afternoon. The women bathe in the lagoon directly in front of their houses, walking into the water, wearing their skirts. The men usually bathe in a secluded beach far from habitation, and change loin cloths, which they keep in the canoe houses. Both sexes use grated coconut meat as soap."

28: Spiro--147 [4]
116, 512

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"There is little activity after bathing. [WPM: in late afternoon] The people retire to their own homes, or to the homes of someone else. The cânoe-houses and beaches are empty."

28: Spiro--147 [6]
116, 512, 517

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"After dinner, activity again breaks down into sex and age categories. The families sit about, talking, drinking toddy, smoking, and exchanging news of the day. Often, a couple visits its in-laws. Some families may sing a chapeng until they retire, others may visit the home of a sick person. During the dark of the moon, the family usually retires to the interior of the house when it gets dark, and go to sleep shortly after. The children usually going to sleep at the same time as the parents.

On moonlit nights, the people do not retire until much later. They remain out-of-doors, with seemingly great spirits, and laughter may be heard ringing out from many courtyards."

28: Spiro--147 [7]
116, 512, 517, 533, 123

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"After dinner the young men rarely remain at home, but return again to the canoe-house, or in the case of a moonlit night to the beaches. Like the adults they talk about the events of the day, or of some projected plan, or just small talk. They often sing songs, mostly bwaruch, though chapengs are also sung. If I were with them, they were eager that I tell them of America or teach them some English. On a dark night they return to their homes at dark, but on a moonlit night they may fish from the beach, and often they would along the reef in their canoes.

The young women never leave their homes after dinner, except in the company of their parents, again the boys enjoying greater freedom than the girls."